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PHILOMATHIC PRIZE POEM.

Pierce, Thomas

THE

MUSE OF HESPERIA.

A

POETIC REVERIE.

For Nature there, since first her opening eye
Hailed the bright orb her Father hung on high,
Still, on her bosom wears the enamelled vest,
That bloomed and budded on her infant breast.

PIERPONT.

CINCINNATI:
PUBLISHED BY THE PHILOMATHIC SOCIETY,
Looker & Reynolds, Printers.
1823.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN November, 1821, the PHILOMATHIC SOCIETY, of *Cincinnati College*, offered, by public advertisement, a Gold Medal, of the value of fifty dollars, for the best Poem that should be written for the occasion, by a citizen of the Western country. In relation to the length and subject of the Poem, these restrictions were imposed:—that it should consist of not less than 400 lines; and that whatever natural scenery, historical incidents or existing institutions might be commemorated, should be of a Western character. By the first of April, 1822, (the period at which candidates were to send their performances,) twelve Poems were received by the Secretary of the Society. On the report of a committee, to whom the decision was referred, the Medal was awarded to the "MUSE OF HESPERIA," the author of which, as was ascertained on opening the envelop accompanying the Poem, has declined ever making himself known to the Society, so as to receive the Medal. His residence was not stated, but from many circumstances it is inferred that he is a citizen of Cincinnati.

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Some of the other performances contained passages of considerable merit, which have already been given to the public in a different form. "*The Banks of Ohio*," by a Lady of Madison, Indiana, was adjudged next in merit, to the "Muse of Hesperia."

The author has evidently imposed severe restrictions on the full flow of his sentiments, and the excursive flights of his fancy, by adopting a stanza of such difficult construction,—which is better calculated for the Ode, than for poems of any length. That introduced by Spenser in his 'Faëry Queene,' and so successfully employed by Beattie, Byron, and others, at later periods of time, is perhaps better calculated than any other, for the conveyance of serious and dignified sentiments. Though after all, the common heroic measure may be considered still preferable. Had the author adopted either of these, he would have rendered his production less ambiguous in some, and more interesting in all parts, to the reader.

The Society do not give this as the best exhibition of poetic talent in the West, but as the best that was submitted to their judgment; which, by an original stipulation of the advertisement, they are required to publish. In complying with this stipulation, they have been careful to procure the best mechanical execution of the work that was within their reach; and in doing so, they conceive they are absolved from every duty they owed to themselves, the author and the public.

POETIC REVERIE.

THE

MUSE OF HESPERIA.

I.

'TWAS eve: the sun had sunk to rest
Beneath a hill's aspiring crest;
But still the gush
Of changeful light illumed the skies,
And tinged the clouds with varying dyes,
Till faded from our eager eyes
Its latest blush.

II.

'Twas eve: the hum of city-crowd—
Now faint and weak, now clear and loud;
The low of kine;
The bleat of sheep on neighbouring plains;
The milk-maid's song of love-lorn swains;
The cow-boy's still more rustic strains;
At once combine.

III.

'Twas eve: the streams and groves along
The *Whip-poor-will* poured forth his song
In descant shrill;
And night's more solitary bird
His hoarse and boding song preferred;
While ever and anon was heard
Some distant rill.

IV.

'Twas eve: in woodlands dark and damp
The glow-worm lit his emerald lamp;
While to and fro
The fire-flies darted quick and bright,
As if the countless stars of night
Had left their empyreän height
To sport below.

V.

'Twas eve: the toils of daytime o'er,
I strolled along Ohio's shore,
Where yonder vale
Meanders through a hundred hills,
From whose high tops transparent rills
Rush boldly down; while music fills
The evening gale.

VI.

There, on the grassy shore, a grove,
Sacred to Solitude and Love,
Spread wide around;
The moonbeams through the foliage played
In changeful fits of light and shade;
I trembled—paused—for lo! I strayed
On fairy ground.

VII.

Now calm and calmer stirred the breeze,
Till not a zephyr fanned the trees:
So wildly sweet—
So still—so awful—so profound—
The breathless solitude around,
That e'en distinctly seemed to sound
The pulse's beat.

VIII.

Sudden, within this fairy ring,
Where Silence moved on silken wing,
From harps of heaven
Burst the full songs of seraph-choirs,
As angel-fingers touched the lyres,
And Music breathed with all the fires
To poets given.

IX.

When lo! from heaven's etherial height,
Encompassed by a sheet of light,
A spirit—fair
As ever poet's fancy drew—
On viewless pinions downward flew,
And, hovering full before my view,
Alighted there.

X.

Against a harp her head reclined,
Around her brows the laurel twined;
—This Angel-form
Through me, her idle son, addressed—
My brother Poets of the West!
—With noble air, this firm behest
In language warm.

XI.

"Know, youthful Bards;—for scarcely yet
Pieria's waves your lips have wet,
And scarce a wing
Have you stretched forth in life's gay prime
To reach Parnassus' height sublime,
And scarce essayed in polished rhyme
Its charms to sing;

XII.

—"Know, youthful Bards, to me belong
The realms of Genius and of Song:
—Who can refuse
At objects great and good to aim,
On Glory's page to write his name,
And follow on to deathless fame
Hesperia's Muse?

XIII.

"Know, youthful Bards, to me are given
Ten thousand airs from earth and heaven:
—From infant hours
A pupil of the sacred Nine,
Reared by Apollo's hand divine,
The soul of Harmony is mine,
And Music's powers.

XIV.

"O'er stream, and wood, and grove, and lawn
As Night's dim curtain now is drawn,
My object here—
Bards of the West! is to inspire
Your zeal to wake the slumbering lyre
And reach, on classic wings, a higher
And nobler sphere.

XV.

"Shall none but Europe's favourite Bards
Receive the rich and high rewards
To merit due?
Shall Byron, Southey, Scott, and Moore,
Whom countless thousands half adore,
To heights sublime of genius soar,
Unreached by you?

XVI.

"And shall our *Eastern* Poets claim
An immortality of fame,
And they alone?
Shall Pierpont, Percival, and Neal
Apollo's warmest breathings feel,
And all his secret thoughts reveal—
To you unknown?

XVII.

"No—spurn the thought! Be yours the pride
To rise in fame o'er all beside:
For on your view
Sublimer, bolder objects throng
To court a loftier, nobler song;
And glorious deeds of arms belong
Not less to you.

XVIII.

"Have you not JACKSON?—cast your eyes
Where Orleans' orange groves arise—
And see the foe
By thousands fall amid the fight,
Or save themselves by rapid flight;
While he bestows in valour's might
The final blow.

XIX.

"Have you not PERRY?—Erie's wave
Beheld his triumph o'er the brave,
As, far and wide,
Like northern tempests in their rage,
The hostile fleets at once engage,
And stain, as deadly war they wage,
The lucid tide.

XX.

"And is not HARRISON your own?
The patriot—warrior—statesman;—known
Wherever Fame
Hath borne the achievements of the brave?
—Yes: and from death she still shall save,
While *Thames* rolls on a single wave,
His honoured name.

XXI.

"And is not SHELBY,[1] too, your boast?
The veteran-sage—'himself a host'—
Kentucky's pride;
And JOHNSON,[2] dauntless in the field;
And OWEN[3] brave, who scorned to yield,
Who with his blood his prowess sealed,
And nobly died?

XXII.

"And you can gallant JESUP claim,
Who, robed in glory's '*sheet of flame*,'[4]
Victorious fought,
Where loud Niagara's awful sound
Was in the tide of battle drowned—
And gained, with crimsoned laurels crowned,
The fame he sought.

XXIII.

"Yours, too, the young, the generous HART:[5]
—Oh, never did Kentucky part
With one more brave;
More prompt to march in Freedom's cause,
More zealous to defend her laws,
Or one who sunk with more applause
In Valour's grave!

XXIV.

"And yours the pride and grief to tell
How PIKE and DAVIESS[5] fought and fell,
Just as the foe
Were hurrying in disgraceful flight!
—Oh, stranger! tread their green graves light;
For hearts of fire, and arms of might,
Repose below!

XXV.

"What solemn requiem do I hear?
And o'er the plain on yonder bier
Whose corse is borne,
Enwrapt in sorrow's sombre shroud—
Round which a legislative crowd
Pour forth their grief in accents loud,
Or silent mourn?

XXVI.

"'Tis TRIMBLE'S[6]!—he who gave support
To Freedom's cause, when Erie's fort
Refused to yield
To British legions pressing round:
He who—ere yet with awe profound
Those legions fled—received the wound
That never healed!

XXVII.

"These—and their dauntless feats of arms,
Amid the battle's dire alarms
And deadly rage,
Where Death triumphant stalked along—
These, *these* are subjects fit for song:
With these—your own proud themes—prolong
The Muse's page.

XXVIII.

"And in the West do none stand forth
Renowned for intellectual worth—
Who nobly aim
To win the wreaths to Genius dear?
And do no colleges appear,
Where youths may run their bright career
To virtuous fame?

XXIX.

"Yes—young Ohio, rouse thy pride!
See on thy far-famed river's side,
Where to thy mart
Flows half the commerce of the West,
Where wealth and ease thy sons have blest,
Where honour rules the human breast,
Unswayed by art:—

XXX.

"See, where thy rich emporium spreads,
And rears on high her hundred heads,
To public view
Yon dome in modest beauty rise;
Within whose walls the learned and wise,
Like Newton, with observant eyes
Look nature through.

XXXI.

"And thou, the birthplace of the brave,
And promptly generous! who ne'er gave
The breath of life
To one who felt no patriot-flame
When foes traduced his country's name,
Or who declined when danger came
To join the strife:

XXXII.

"Yes—bold Kentucky! Learning's sun
Darts o'er thy classic Lexington
His genial beams;
The clouds of ignorance pass away,
Bursts on the view a brighter day,
And more enchanting, rich, and gay
Each object seems.

XXXIII.

"Yes—at thy soul-inspiring call,
Yon noble scientific Hall
A shrine became,
Where youthful crowds, unlearned before,
Kneel at its altar and adore;
And quaffing deep of various lore,
Aspire to fame.

XXXIV.

"Shall these proud fanes that round us rise,
These sages whom we all should prize
For classic worth—
Shall these remain unknown, unsung—
Concealed the western wilds among?
No—from *your* lyres their fame be flung
O'er all the earth.

XXXV.

"Lo! bursting on the astonished view,
What landscapes, vast and rich and new,
Are yours to boast!
What *mountains* lift their heads on high!
What *lakes* in boundless prospect lie!
What *rivers* roll their volumes by,
To yonder coast!

XXXVI.

"In no department of the globe
Does Flora wear a richer robe,
Of brighter dyes:
Here, in the long career of Time,
Nature still reigns in youthful prime,
And objects beauteous—vast—sublime—
Around her rise.

XXXVII.

"Far westward, where the sun's last rays
Fire the wide landscape with a blaze
Of dazzling gold,
Huge mountains rear their giant-forms
On high amid the wintry storms;
And reaching wide their thousand arms,
A world infold.

XXXVIII.

"There, seated on his rocky throne,
Enwrapt in clouds—supreme, alone—
Where tempests blow,
The mighty *Genius of the West*
Hurls forth his storms: at his behest
The thunders rage, or slumbering rest,
To all below.

XXXIX.

"He looks around with kingly pride:
Far eastward sees, expanded wide,
Vast rivers pour;
Far northward, arctic tempests rave;
Far southward, golden harvests wave;
Far westward, ocean's billows lave
Columbia's shore.

XL.

"How long the war-whoop, round the peak
Of these huge mountains high and bleak,
Responsive rung!
How long those granite rocks have stood!
How long has roared that headlong flood!
How long has bloomed and died that wood!
—By bards unsung.

XLI.

"Nor are their beauties wholly fled
Now that the white man's restless tread
Disturbs the gloom—
A gloom which swift before him flies,
As meadows open to the skies,
As forests fall, and cities rise,
And harvests bloom.

XLII.

"Behold, far north, yon inland seas!
—Now calm, unruffled by a breeze,
They silent sleep;
Now heave on high the mountain-surge,
And wave on wave tremendous urge,
And man and shattered navies merge
Beneath the deep.

XLIII.

"There, 'mid the solitude profound,
With boundless forests closed around—
From age to age
Untutored red men plied the oar,
Ferocious wild beasts trod the shore,
And tempests swept their bosoms o'er
With boisterous rage.

XLIV.

"Anon, their placid, chrystal wave
To all a faithful mirror gave,
Above, around:
There one might see the inverted skies,
See constellations set and rise—
Enlightening with their diamond-eyes
The vast profound.

XLV.

"There, unobserved by bard or sage,
For many an unrecorded age,
The fairy-band,
In cars of softest moonlight made,
Drove o'er the deep; or, jocund, played
Where groves adorned with light and shade
The adjacent land.

XLVI.

"But softly—hark! the white man's tread;
And all the fairy vision 's fled!
—Lo! on the sight
Bursts a new scene—which ne'er can fail
To rouse your pride while navies sail,
And squadrons o'er the foe prevail
In equal fight.

XLVII.

"See, far and wide, ten thousand rills,
Forth issuing from unnumbered hills,
Through vales and woods;
Now gliding gently from their source,
Now gathering strength along their course,
Now rushing with resistless force
To kindred floods.

XLVIII.

"See in one channel broad and deep,
The congregated torrent sweep;
Which, stretching far
O'er many a wide-extended plain,
Resolves its empire to maintain,
And wages with its parent-main
Eternal war.

XLIX.

"As marching on its course sublime,
Through what a vast extent of clime
Its waters glide!
From where the eastern mountains rise,
From those that meet the western skies,
From where the lakes attract our eyes,
To ocean's tide!

L.

"To seek a stream so long and deep,
That flows with such resistless sweep,
Where turn our eyes?
The Danube, Ganges, Nile, and Rhine,
Were all their volumes to combine,
This noble stream would scarce outshine
For length and size.

LI.

"How long, through ages past and gone,
Its waters flowed unheeded on;
As through the dark
Unbounded forest's gloomy shade
In quest of game the Indian strayed,
Or on its surface, sportive, played
His simple bark!

LII.

"And still enchanting is the scene—
Now orchards, fields, and meadows green
Are spreading wide;
Now Art and Science, hand in hand,
Walk forth; and, at their joint command,
Roads, bridges, cities grace the land,
And ships, the tide.

LIII.

"These mountains, vallies, lakes, and woods—
These rills that *glide*, and cataract-floods
That *sweep* along—
To you are grand and fruitful themes:
Gild *these* with Fancy's brightest beams,
And wrap them in the wildest dreams
Of Fairy-song.

LIV.

" For whether *Spring*, with warmth and showers,
Gives to the trees and shrubs and flowers
Another birth;
As zephyrs on light pinions move,
And warblers vocalize each grove
With songs of gratitude and love,
Or sportive mirth:

LV.

" Or *Summer* darts his radiance warm,
And every vegetative form
Is blooming fair;
As rills and rivers cease to flow,
As ardent suns resistless glow,
And breezes scarcely seem to blow—
So calm the air:

LVI.

" Or *Autumn* through the orchard strews,
And native woods, with hand profuse,
His ripened fruit;
As Flora captivates your eyes
With all her gay and sober dyes,
And the wild game in terror flies
The close pursuit:

LVII.

"Or *Winter* from his store-house throws
O'er fields and woods his fleecy snows;
As his cold breath
Whistles among the branches bare,
Stills the sweet songsters of the air,
And nips each herb and flowret fair
With instant death:

LVIII.

"Whether bright *Morn* o'er wood and lawn
Spreads the first blushes of the dawn,
With rosy hand;
As through the air her sweets diffuse,
And from exhaustless mines she strews
Ten thousand gems of crystal dews
O'er all the land:

LIX.

"Or *Noon* sends forth the sultry hours
To scath the choicest fruits and flowers;
As Phœbus now
With undiminished radiance glows,
And no decrease of fervour knows,
Till Eve her dusky mantle throws
O'er Nature's brow:

LX.

"Or gloomy *Night* extends o'er all
The slumbering world her blackest pall;
As from her seat,
In ether fixt, she views the whole—
The countless orbs that o'er her roll,
And land and sea, from pole to pole,
Beneath her feet:

LXI.

"Whether abroad the tempest lowers,
The lightnings flash, and thunder roars
With deafening sound:
Or Nature's face is calm and fair,
And all that live their joys declare,
And fragrance through the balmy air
Is breathing round:—

LXII.

"Nay—view it in what state you will—
This Eden breathes enchantment still.
Delighted here
Fays, Sylphs, and Genii oft preside,
Unseen on airy pinions glide,
And watch and guard the landscape wide
Through all the year.

LXIII.

"Must foreign rhymers still succeed
In framing tales for you to read?
Can feudal jars
Alone inspire you with delight—
As vengeful chieftain, squire, and knight
Rush forth, in massive armor dight,
To border-wars?

LXIV.

"And will you not in lofty verse
Feats more chivalric still rehearse?
—The feats of those
Who, where his herd the swain now leads
O'er plains where peace to war succeeds—
Met, and chastised for barbarous deeds,
Their savage foes.

LXV.

"You will:—and while with grief you tell
The sad disasters which befel
Your grandsires brave,
Forget not him, so often tried
In dangers few have known beside:
—Go, seek in frontier forests wide
For Boone's lone grave.

LXVI.

"These are not all.—As Darwin flings
His fingers o'er the finest strings
Of Music's lyre;
As Flora's various tribes he draws,
Shall he alone unfold each cause
Of Nature's attributes and laws,
And endless gyre?

LXVII.

"Permit it not. Be yours the task,
As in Apollo's rays you bask,
The Arts to lead,
And Science, to your fairy-bowers,
To charm them with your tuneful powers,
And crown them with the choicest flowers
To bards decreed.

LXVIII.

"Be yours the office to describe
The blooming belles of Flora's tribe;
For, hidden here,
Linnæus' self again might find
New treasures to enrich his mind,
To cultivate his taste refined,
And judgment clear.

LXIX.

"Look through this pure and fragrant air,
To note the volant minstrels there,
As yet unknown;
The finny race that cleave these floods;
That seek those fens, the reptile-broods;
And beasts that roam these boundless woods,
So late their own.

LXX.

"Descend a hundred hills beneath,[7]
Where, dark as night and still as death,
Yon cave appears;
See its stalactites displayed,
Its gorgeous fanes of chrystals made,
Its lifeless tenant, undecayed
For countless years.

LXXI.

"Sing how the soil which now we tread
Was once the ocean's coral bed;[8]
'Till, from the strife
Of central fires, an earthquake-stroke
Was given—the southern barrier broke;
And lo! a new creation woke
To light and life.

LXXII.

"How then, these vallies wide along,
From northern lakes the currents strong,
In eddying coil,
Rushed southward with impetuous sweep
Where now but rills are seen to creep,
And formed these vast alluvions—deep
In fertile soil.

LXXIII.

"And sing how long these ramparts rude,[9]
Spread through the western wilds, have stood,
Extended wide:
Whether some bold adventurous host
Of white-men, wrecked upon the coast,
Could this stupendous labor boast;
—Then fled or died:

LXXIV.

"Or whether, whence old Ocean roars
Round Asia's hyperboreän shores,
The Tartars wild
Here wandered, and these bulwarks planned;
Till, pressed by some more potent band,
They southward fled—and found a land
More fair and mild:

LXXV.

—"Where, self-illumed, from age to age
Man from a savage to a sage
Progressive grew;
Where, undisturbed by foreign foe,
The infant Arts began to grow—
Till rose the towers of Mexico
And rich Peru.

LXXVI.

"Whoe'er the builders may have been—
How altered now the forest scene
From early times!
The former race, though rude yet brave,
Perhaps from death their tribes to save,
Forsook the land their fathers gave
For other climes.

LXXVII.

"Now 'mid these shapeless mounds of soil,
Thrown up with long laborious toil,
And want of skill;
A cultivated landscape spreads,
Towns, villas, cities lift their heads,
And Commerce her rich treasures leads
Along each rill.

LXXVIII.

"Where late the war-whoop's hideous sound
Alone disturbed the silence round;
Now thousands join
In sacred harmony to raise
The Christian's grateful song of praise,
To HIM who beamed o'er all their ways
His light divine.

LXXIX.

"Where late the Indian wigwams stood,
Deep in the unbounded range of wood,
Where scarce the sun
Could penetrate the twilight-shade;
Now domes of science stand displayed,
Where youths to fame, by learning's aid,
Their journey run.

LXXX.

"Where lately armed for deadly strife
With tomahawk and scalping-knife,
The natives strove;
Now dove-eyed Peace triumphant reigns,
And o'er the cultivated plains,
In converse sweet, gay nymphs and swains
Delighted rove.

LXXXI.

—"Here pause; and with prospective glass
Behold new ages as they pass
In long review:
Behold the various beasts of prey,
And red-men more untamed than they,
Become extinct, or pass away
To regions new.

LXXXII.

"See teeming cities rise beside
Missouri's and Columbia's tide,
And where the snow
On Chipewan's high summit gleams;
—Lo! fields, and meads, and lakes, and streams,
Now open to the sun's bright beams,
Resplendent glow.

LXXXIII.

"See turnpikes and canals connect
Oceans which continents dissect;
See Trade rescind
The orders which she gave before,
And bring from the Pacific's shore,
O'er western mountains, to each door
The stores of Ind.

LXXXIV.

—"And still to your aspiring song,
In common, other themes belong:
The fertile field
Where nobler bards their laurels raise,
(A boon which all their toil repays)
As large a wreath of fadeless bays
To *you* may yield.

LXXXV.

"You, too, can aid the noble task
Vice to expose, when she the mask
Of Virtue wears;
From Scandal's shafts the good to save,
From coward-tongues to shield the brave,
And show the proud and wealthy knave
The heart he bears.

LXXXVI.

"You, too, can Virtue's laws maintain,
Defend Religion's sacred fane
'Gainst atheist-arms;
And from the cold o'erclouded night
Of lone Obscurity, to light
Of glorious day, lead Genius bright
In all his charms.

LXXXVII.

"You, too, can run each poet's round—
Can wander wide o'er classic ground,
In thoughtful mood,
Where famed Parnassus towers on high,
Or Tempè's blooming vallies lie,
Or old Scamander murmurs by
Where Ilion stood.

LXXXVIII.

"Or where on high Olympus nods—
The throne of goddesses and gods—
Or Ida towers
Aloft; or Ossa strives to meet
The concave bright; or, at his feet,
Where Peneus winds through vallies—sweet
With fragrant flowers.

LXXXIX.

"You, too, can gather flowers divine
That bloom on sainted Palestine;
Can trace the shore
Of sacred Jordan to his fount,
Climb holy Gilead's balmy mount,
And all the toils and pains recount
The Prophets bore.

XC.

"Can view the dead sulphureous flood
Where Sodom and Gomorrah stood;
The lonely strand
Where Tyre and Sidon's ruins lie,
Where Nain and Nazareth meet the eye,
Or Hermon, Carmel, Calvary—high
O'erlook the land.

XCI.

"For know, the Bard is Fancy's child:
—Whate'er is grand, or strange, or wild,
His genius moves;
His pathway lies o'er fairy-ground,
Where Sylphs and Genii guard him round;
—Through realms on high and depths profound
His spirit roves.

XCII.

"A hermit 'midst the crowd of men,
Through Nature's works his restive ken
Excursive flies:
Though on the *present* moments cast,
He lives, in thought, through all the *past*,
And those to *come*, while time shall last
To earth and skies.

XCIII.

"He journies, careless of a path,
Where the rude tempest in its wrath
Spreads ruin wide;
Or through the dense untrodden wood—
Creation's gloomiest solitude;
O'er mountains—by the cataract-flood—
Or ocean-side.

XCIV.

"And learn this truth, my pupils dear!
—Where'er you journey, or whate'er
The plans you lay,
Let Truth and Nature be your guide:
—The moment you desert their side,
Through trackless wilds you wander wide,
And lose your way.

XCV.

"Who leaves *their* fire, to warm his heart
By the cold dubious light of Art,
With gaudy flowers
May please young Fancy for a time,
And charm with brilliancy of rhyme;
But ne'er can reach the true sublime,
With all his powers.

XCVI.

"*Art* is the ignis-fatuus-ray
That leads the wanderer's feet astray;
Fancy, a gleam;
—The meteor flashes—and 'tis gone:
—But *Nature* is the unwearied sun,
That gives whate'er he shines upon
A glorious beam.

XCVII.

"'Tis *mine* your bosoms to inspire
With Genius' warmest, brightest fire;
'Tis *yours*, in turn—
While pressing for the shrine of Fame,
To swell her records with each name—
To make this heaven-enkindled flame
For ever burn.

XCVIII.

"To flatter title, birth, or state,
—The poorly rich—or meanly great—
Was never given
So rich a boon on Nature's part:
—Oh, never thus degrade an art,
Designed to lift the human heart
From earth to heaven!

XCIX.

"Whoe'er this sacred weapon draws
'Gainst Virtue's or Religion's cause—
Though he possest
Mæonides' and Maro's fire,
Or Milton's lore, and Dryden's lyre—
Thrusts a keen dagger at his sire,
To pierce his breast.

C.

"Whoever weakens or destroys
This fount, from which the purest joys
Unceasing flow;
Buries in earth a diamond bright,
Blots out the sun's meridian light,
Or hurls an angel from his height
To realms below.

CI.

"And envy not the cobweb-wreaths
That many a modern rhymer weaves,
His brows to grace;
For these are but Mimosa's form
Amid Boreas' wintry storm,
Or hoar-frost 'mid the blushes warm
Of Phœbus' face.

CII.

"And e'en the well-earned fame refuse
Of Milton's, Pope's, and Thompson's muse;
Though fresh shall bloom
Their laurels in the Muse's page,
And each historian's pen engage—
Though they themselves from age to age
Sleep in the tomb.

CIII.

"Nay—copy not the noblest lays
Of ancient or of modern days:
—The genuine bard
Dashes all rules of art aside,
And, taking Nature for his guide,
Reaps—as he roams creation wide—
A rich reward.

CIV.

"For what, my child, is genuine song?
—'Tis not, as Fashion's giddy throng
So often deem,
The far-fetched, witty, odd conceit
Which all may write, as all repeat;
Nor number, measure, rhyme, nor feet
That gild each theme.

CV.

"It is an undefined controul
That fires—transports—illumes the soul
With secret sway;
And, reckless as to phrase or form,
Bursts forth in language bold and warm—
Like sunshine blazing through the storm
Of winter's day.

CVI.

"'Tis not pale Cynthia's feeble light,
Faint-glimmering through a cheerless night—
Cold—still—profound;
'Tis not a gloomy stagnant lake,
Whose sleep no babbling rivulets break;
'Tis not a breeze that scarce can wake
The echo's sound.

CVII.

"It is the brilliant *northern dawn*,
In all the changeful colours drawn
That bards describe;
'Tis now a river deep and strong
Rolling in majesty along;
Anon, a whirlwind 'mid the throng
Of Flora's tribe.

CVIII.

" 'Tis now the thunder's awful roar,
Borne by ten thousand echoes o'er
The vault of heaven;
Now, the swift lightning's vivid rays,
As o'er the clouds it lambent plays;
Anon, the dread volcano's blaze,
With fury driven.

CIX.

" 'Tis now the pine's majestic form,
Which, heedless of the winter's storm,
Is seen to bloom
From age to age in youthful prime;
And now a pyramid sublime,
That falls but with the fall of Time,
And shares his tomb."

CX.

She ceased.—Around her sainted head
An arrowy sphere of radiance spread,
Intensely bright;
And, mounting high on wings of wind,
She soared through ether unconfined
And left a brilliant trace behind,
Of vivid light.

CXI.

So, sinking in the western main,
Far up the heaven a lucid train
Bright Sol displays:
So, darting through exterior skies
In crimson paths, the fire-ball flies,
And for a moment dims our eyes
With dazzling blaze.

CXII.

A holy silence reigned around—
And, as I left the enchanted ground
Where late she stood,
Diviner spirits hovered there,
More fragrant breathed the balmy air,
And the full moon showed doubly fair
Ohio's flood.

NOTES.

NOTES.

NOTE I.

"*And is not* SHELBY, *too, your boast?*"

A reference has inadvertently been placed at the name of SHELBY—a name already too well known to require the elucidation of a note.

NOTE II.

"*And* JOHNSON, *dauntless in the field.*"

Colonel RICHARD M. JOHNSON, of Kentucky, distinguished for his ardent patriotism and efficient services during the late war, and particularly for his gallant charge at the head of the mounted regiment at the battle of the Thames, 5th Oct. 1813.

NOTE III.

"*And* OWEN *brave, who scorned to yield,*
Who with his blood his prowess sealed,
And nobly died."

Colonel ABRAHAM OWEN, distinguished in the early Indian wars in Kentucky. Previous to the battle of Tippecanoe, he joined the army of Governor Harrison, as a volunteer in the ranks, and accepted the place of Volunteer Aid. He fell at Tippecanoe, in the early part of the action.

NOTE IV.

"*And you can gallant* JESUP *claim,*
Who robed in glory's 'sheet of flame'
Victorious fought."

By the following extract from General Brown's official report of the battle of Bridgewater, it will be seen that the '*sheet of flame*,' which might otherwise pass for a fiction of poetry, is an historical fact:—"About the time Colonel Miller carried the enemy's cannon, the 25th regiment, under Major JESUP, was engaged in a more obstinate conflict with all that remained to dispute with us the field of battle. The Major, as has already been stated, had been ordered by General Scott, at the commencement of the action, to take ground to the right. He had succeeded in turning the enemy's left flank—had captured (by a detachment under Captain Ketchum) General Riall and sundry other officers, *and showed himself again to his own army in a* BLAZE OF FIRE, which defeated or destroyed a superior force of the enemy."

NOTE V.

"*Yours, too, the young, the generous* HART."

Captain NATHANIEL HART, a native of Kentucky, who at an early age fell a lamented victim in what may be styled by pre-eminence THE MASSACRE—which will for ever cause the field of battle at the River Raisin to be remembered as a FIELD OF BLOOD. The melancholy fate of this enthusiast warrior, so distinguished for chivalrous courage, and for the milder virtues of the heart so loved wherever known, resulted from the confidence he reposed in the assurances which he received from Captain Elliot, of the British army—with whom he had been intimately acquainted in Kentucky. In addition to this assurance of safety from the Indians, Captain Elliot pledged his honour, that he should on the morrow be conveyed in his own cariole to Fort Malden. Instead of receiving the promised protection and conveyance, he was sacrificed to appease the contention of savages for his person.

"*And yours the pride and grief to tell*
How Pike and DAVIESS *fought and fell.*"

JOSEPH HAMILTON DAVIESS, who fell at Tippecanoe, was a native of Kentucky. He was a man of fine talents and indefatigable industry.

He stood among the foremost in Kentucky in the profession of the law: military tactics were, however, his favourite study. Understanding that General Harrison was authorized to march against the Indians on the Wabash, Colonel Daviess with a few volunteers went to join his standard, and was immediately appointed, by the General, Colonel of Dragoons. He was mortally wounded during the action, and died a short time after its close.

NOTE VI.

"———*o'er the plain on yonder bier*
Whose corse is borne?
* * * * * * *
'Tis Trimble's———"

Colonel William A. Trimble, late of the Senate of the United States from the state of Ohio, was a native of Kentucky. He received a wound in the sortie from Fort Erie on the 15th of August, 1815, of which wound he died at Washington in the winter of 1821-22.

NOTE VII.

"*Descend, a hundred hills beneath,*
Where, dark as night and still as death,
Yon cave appears."

Alluding to the numerous and extensive caverns in Kentucky and other parts of the western country; and moreover, to the several mummies found therein: one of which (a female) is deposited in the Cabinet of the American Antiquarian Society.—Vide *Archæologia Americana, Vol. I.*

NOTE VIII.

"*Sing how the soil which now we tread*
Was once the ocean's coral bed."

That the valley of the Mississippi, extending from the range of the Alleghany mountains on the east, to that of the Chipewan on the west; and from the great chain of Lakes on the north, to the Gulf of Mexico on the south, was the bed of an ocean at a comparatively late period of the world—has been rendered sufficiently probable from a geo-

logical examination of this extensive region. For the different theories respecting the causes which operated to withdraw this vast body of water, and at a subsequent period to pour such overwhelming torrents from the north along the vallies of the smallest as well as the largest rivers and creeks, as is indicated by the water-worn *debris* observable almost to the summits of the bordering hills—see *Dr. Drake's Picture of Cincinnati*, and *Hayden's Geological Essays*.

NOTE IX.

"And sing how long these ramparts rude,
Spread through the western wilds, have stood."

For conjectures respecting the Ancient Works of the western country, and the origin, history and final destiny of their authors—see *Clavigero's Hist. Mex.—Humboldt's Trav.—Dr. Barton's Letter to Dr. Priestly in Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc. Vol. IV.—Dr. Drake's Pic. Cin.—Breckenridge's View of Louisiana.—Dr. Mitchell's Letters to Sec. Amer. Antiq. Soc.*—and *Description of the Antiquities of the Western States, by Caleb Atwater.*

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